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Beyond the Catch 22?

Towards

a Phronetic Approach to the

Intervention Dilemma

Catch 22 says they have a right to do anything we can't stop them from doing.¹

Joseph Heller,
Catch 22

The Good [...] has no universal form, regardless of the subject matter or situation: sound moral judgement always respects the detailed circumstances of specific kinds of cases.²

Aristotle,
The Nicomachean Ethics

Phronetic social science is dialogical in the sense that it incorporates, and, if successful, itself is incorporated into, a polyphony of voices, with no one voice, including that of the researcher, claiming final authority.³

Bent Flyvbjerg,
Making Social Science Matter

¹ Heller, Joseph, *Catch 22* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 2011), p. 407

² Aristotle, cited by Toulmin, Stephen, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 31-32

³ Flyvbjerg, Bent, *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 139

Abstract

The intervention dilemma, initially articulated by Hedley Bull and commonly conceived as the key dispute between pluralist and solidarist proponents of the English School of International Relations, has gradually become one of the central dilemmas in the context of tackling human suffering. Roughly defined as a stalemate between doing something through intervention (which inevitably tramples the norm of non-intervention) and doing nothing (which entails moral indifference and possibly 'dirty hands' through idly standing by), this dissertation broaches two distinct strands of Liberal Peace critique as expressions of each position of the aforementioned juxtaposition. Relating this debate between Roland Paris and David Chandler to the cosmopolitan-communitarian divide, the intervention dilemma will be defined as a Catch 22, in which opting for one choice makes the other one seem more eligible. The only way to overcome this entrenched debate is by letting go of these foundationalist views on morality. Following Oliver P. Richmond's assertion that sustainable peace can only be reached through dialogue that takes the everyday context as its designated starting point, the Linklaterian notion of dialogical politics will be defined as a crucial element of overcoming the intervention dilemma. Finally, this can only be achieved through a so-called phronetic approach that elects practical judgements in favour of theoretical frameworks. The conclusion is then drawn that if we want to assess the necessity of intervening or not in the case of human suffering and therefore make practical judgements that matter, the notion of power has to be taken into account by asking questions of the power relations among the parties involved, including the researcher, and of who wins and who loses in the case of humanitarian intervention.

Declaration

The word length of this dissertation is 14.992.

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted for candidature for any other degree.

Signed:

Date: 12 September 2012

This work is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used, the extent and nature of the correction is stated in footnotes. Other sources are acknowledged (e.g. footnotes giving explicit references). A bibliography is appended.

Signed:

Date: 12 September 2012

Acknowledgements

It was an engagement with the Democratic Peace theory, while studying International Relations at the University of Antwerp in 2010, which laid the foundations for thinking about the notion of intervention. Under the conspicuous title *The Dialectics of the Democratic Peace*, my dissertation at the time asserted that this theoretical framework shows risks of becoming a justification for interventionist policies. Largely inspired by *Democratic Wars: Looking at the Dark Side of the Democratic Peace*,⁴ I based this assertion on the absence of critical engagement with these justifications in liberal foreign policies regardless of the flawed logic that underpins the Democratic Peace theory.

With radical criticism towards any form of intervention justification as a foundation, I became inspired to challenge my own convictions by Huw Williams's teachings on international justice at Aberystwyth University. Discarding intervention too swiftly could inhibit any prospect of tackling issues of injustice and thereby ending human suffering. Throughout an engagement with his book *On Rawls, Development and Global Justice: The Freedom Of Peoples*,⁵ I was lead into a new way of thinking about the issue of intervention that exposed the limitations of my previous assertions. Subsequently, it was this book that provided me with a perspicuous articulation of the intervention dilemma and its formulation as a Catch 22. This acknowledgement section is therefore mainly included to express my gratitude and recognition for Williams's patient

⁴ Geis, Anna, Brock, Lothar, and Müller, Harald (eds.), *Democratic Wars: Looking at the Dark Side of the Democratic Peace* (New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2006)

⁵ Williams, Huw Lloyd, *On Rawls, Development and Global Justice. The Freedom of Peoples* (Hampshire, Palgrave MacMillan, 2011)

and encouraging support throughout the process of writing this dissertation. Without his contribution, this work would not have reached its present condition. It goes without saying that I nonetheless take full responsibility for what it eventually turned into.

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An Old Question Asked Anew

If a right of intervention is proclaimed for the purpose of enforcing standards of conduct, and yet no consensus exists in the international community governing its use, then the door is open to intervention by particular states using such right as a pretext, and the principle of territorial sovereignty is placed in jeopardy.⁶

Initially published as a paper given to the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics in 1962, *The Grotian Conception of International Society* is known to be Hedley Bull's effort to flesh out a theory of International Society that incorporated pluralist and solidarist strands of thought. The so-called English School of International Relations contends that sovereign states form an International Society. This has induced its proponents to either value the *order* among the multiple communities in this society (pluralist) or explore the prospects of wielding *justice* to promote high standards of behaviour within these communities (solidarist).⁷ This distinction, although seemingly innocuous, essentially embodies a persistent tension that has far exceeded the boundaries of the English School. Applied to the question of the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention, the pluralist-solidarist divide can be translated into the contraposition between the prevailing norm of non-intervention and the issue of armed intervention in the case of human suffering. According to Nick Wheeler, humanitarian intervention therefore "poses the conflict between order and justice in its starkest form."⁸

⁶ Bull, Hedley, 'The Grotian Conception of International Society', in Butterfield, Herbert and Wight, Martin (eds.) *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 71

⁷ Suganami, Hidemi, 'The English School in a Nutshell', *Ritsumeikan Annual Review of International Studies*, vol. 9 (2010), pp. 15-28

⁸ Wheeler, Nicholas J., 'Pluralist or Solidarist Conceptions of International Society: Bull and Vincent on Humanitarian Intervention', *Millennium – Journal of International Studies*, vol. 21 (1992), p. 463

In his later work however, Bull abandoned his pluralist assertions and adumbrated a more solidarist theory of international society in which he explored the reach of justice beyond the borders in *International Society*.⁹ Be that as it may, this *solidarism of the will* is fundamentally challenged by the *pluralism of the intellect* that exposes the former as “cosmopolitan solidarism”¹⁰ by asserting that there are multiple concepts of justice. Implementing a particular notion of justice therefore severely threatens to erode the norm of non-intervention and affecting coexistence and order in *International Society*. In other words, the central hitch is that there is insufficient consensus on what justice is and what level of human suffering would justify intervention. Until then: “the cure may well be worse than the disease.”¹¹ Not before consensus on a universal concept of justice is reached, any particular concept of justice with universal aspirations might provoke dangerous outcomes.

Although Hidemi Suganami might be right in asserting that “most English School thinkers are solidarists at heart”¹², this does not resolve the underlying tension between intervening to end human suffering and not intervening because action might do more harm than inaction. On what grounds can one defend the pluralist norm of non-intervention? Or as Chris Brown states, “[i]f diversity entails that states have the right to mistreat their populations, then it is difficult to see why such diversity should be valued.”¹³ The issue is even knottier when the international system itself is held to be the producer of injustice. For

⁹ Wheeler, Nicholas J. and Dunne, Tim, ‘Hedley Bull’s Pluralism of the Intellect and Solidarism of the Will’, *International Affairs*, vol. 72 (1996), pp. 91-107

¹⁰ Wheeler & Dunne, *Pluralism and Solidarism*, p. 98

¹¹ Wheeler, *Bull & Vincent*, p. 487

¹² Suganami, *The English School*, p. 26

¹³ Brown, Chris, *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 125

instance, in the present economical order, doing nothing has a considerable price tag. Consequently, this tension has gradually evolved into a dilemma or *Catch 22* between doing something and doing nothing in which no option is entirely satisfying.

'Doing something' to rescue non-citizens facing the extreme is likely to provoke the charge of interference in the internal affairs of another state, while 'doing nothing' can lead to accusations of moral indifference.¹⁴

This dissertation will address the old question on intervention anew. Rather than follow the framework of the English School, the argument will take the *Liberal Peace thesis* as its starting point. The reason for this decision is twofold. Firstly, although it was arguably the English School who originally articulated and theorised the intervention dilemma, this did not result in a viable framework for assessing issues of intervention. Even Wheeler's *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* leaves the reader behind with an idealistic hope for a solidarist world to come as a compensation for a provisional resort to pluralism.¹⁵ Secondly, rather than audaciously discarding the English School as an outdated and feckless enterprise, the argument will be made that during the last two decades, the Liberal Peace thesis has gained considerable support as a framework for assessing emerging issues like humanitarian intervention. The key question then is: Why start this introduction with a consideration of the pluralist-solidarist divide? The main reason for this is the resonance of Bull's solidarism of the will in the cosmopolitan aspiration to end human suffering. They both inevitably thrust upon the tension Wheeler articulated so pertinently.

¹⁴ Wheeler, Nicholas J., *Saving Strangers: Humanitarian Intervention in International Society* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 1

¹⁵ Suganami, *The English School*, p. 26

Although a reference to the English School will be made occasionally, it will not constitute the central topic of engagement because of the abovementioned reasons. Whereas the English School's articulation of this dilemma has to be kept in mind, the emergence of it in the Liberal Peace thesis is what moved this dissertation and is therefore taken to be its starting point.

The persistence of this thesis and more importantly, its failed translation into policy, has in itself sparked notable strands of criticism. Two distinct answers to the question of the implied intervention within this framework will constitute the outset of this dissertation. Cautioning moral indifference and a continuation of human suffering, Roland Paris holds that we are to critically engage with the Liberal Peace thesis and modify it in order to preserve its advantageous elements. Subsequently, the dilemma is initiated by opening up to David Chandler's objection to the uncritical stance towards intervention that Paris's argument entails. In order to clarify this juxtaposition more thoroughly, the second part of this dissertation will relate these positions to one of the most fundamental divides in political theory, namely between *cosmopolitanism* and *communitarianism*.¹⁶ By delving into the core aspects and contemporary proponents of both cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, the question of whether there is any prospect of bridging the gap between these two positions will be addressed. After engaging with John Rawls's *The Law of Peoples*,¹⁷ the second part will conclude that this work arrived at one of the boldest formulations of the intervention dilemma that bears little prospect for a prosperous outcome.

¹⁶ Although one could have included the English School's dichotomy between solidarism and pluralism since this is another variation of the aforementioned divide, this argument will not be made here.

¹⁷ Rawls, John, *The Law Of Peoples* (Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1999)

In the third part, the argument will therefore retrace its steps by exploring a different tradition within both the Liberal Peace thesis and cosmopolitan thought that seeks to transcend the ever-lurking stalemate by placing *dialogical politics* and the everyday context at its core. Eventually, this will probe the question of what the implications and prospects are for aspiring and constructing theoretical frameworks on intervention. By broaching the work of Chris Brown and Bent Flyvbjerg, the argument will be made that, rather than the application of abstract blueprints, we have to consider making practical judgements, steeped in the Aristotelian notion of *Phronesis*, that take into account the key aspects of dialogical politics and include the voice of the researcher in a polyphony of voices. Additionally, the critique of opening the door to anything-goes judgements will be contested by taking the notion of power into account. By asking questions about power, like for instance who gains and who loses when an intervention is waged or not, a resort to arbitrary and inconsistent judgements is circumvented and issues of intervention can be addressed more effectively.

Part I

The Intervention Dilemma in

The Liberal Peace Thesis

Ever since the end of the Cold War, the so-called Liberal Peace thesis has received much attention from both an academic perspective through the work of various International Relations (IR) scholars, and from more field-oriented perspectives. What was specifically intriguing about this thesis was its applicability to policy issues like humanitarian intervention, which is why it is asserted in this dissertation. The first part of this dissertation will provide a detailed analysis of the Liberal Peace debate as an articulation of the intervention dilemma by placing two notable strands of criticism to the fore.

Briefly summarised, the Liberal Peace thesis is based on the conviction that “democracy, the rule of law and market economics would create sustainable peace in post-conflict and transitional states and societies[.]”¹⁸ This consensus is grounded on more quantitative research like for instance Bruce Russett’s *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World*,¹⁹ in which the author provides a notable amount of data to support the assertion that democracies are not likely to wage war with one another. This in turn increases

¹⁸ Campbell, Susanna, Chandler, David, and Sabaratnam, Meera (eds.), *A Liberal Peace? The Problems and Practices of Peacebuilding* (London, Zed Books Limited, 2011), p. 1

¹⁹ Russett, Bruce, *Grasping the Democratic Peace: Principles for a Post-Cold War World* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993)

the prospects that the application of this framework on post-conflict societies would create sustainable peace. More importantly, it has strengthened the assertion that the Liberal Peace thesis can justify certain interventions.

However, throughout the events that found their justification in this assertion, it became obvious that the equation *democracy = peace* is rather simplistic and a little too optimistic.²⁰ After repeated failure of implementing the Liberal Peace framework throughout the peace operations of the 1990's, debate has emerged that questions its value and validity.²¹ Although Campbell, Chandler, and Sabaratnam hold that confining this debate between “critical voices” (those who critically engage the issue of peace through intervention) and “problem solvers” (those who wish to modify or improve the Liberal Peace framework) is an “unhelpful dichotomy”²², I would still argue that, if we relate this debate to the topic of intervention, it defines this issue from a perspective of clarity. It is only within this purpose that this division is to be situated for it is not my intention to entrench or juxtapose this debate too radically. I want to stress that this division is arbitrary outside the framework of this dissertation.

1. 1. Saving Liberal Peacebuilding?

One might wonder if there are considerable alternatives to the Liberal Peace framework that successfully address the pressing issues which call for our

²⁰ Rasler, Karen and Thompson, William R., *Puzzles of the Democratic Peace: Theory, Geopolitics and the Transformation of World Politics* (Hampshire, Palgrave MacMillan, 2005)

²¹ Campbell et al, *A Liberal Peace?*, p. 1

²² Ibid, p. 1

attention on the one hand, without lapsing in a simplified perspective of this framework on the other hand. Arguing that such alternatives do not exist, Roland Paris claims we have no options but to modify the Liberal Peace thesis and consequently save liberal peacebuilding.²³ This is caused by a motivation to tackle these issues more effectively but inevitably entails a less critical perspective on intervening.

Paris starts his argument by referring to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who in 1992 wrote an *Agenda for Peace*,²⁴ widely seen as the founding framework for what came to be known as post-conflict peacebuilding: action “to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.”²⁵ In the same decade, fourteen peacebuilding operations were deployed in regions that recently had experienced civil war. Although engagement with the foundational assumptions of this policy is remarkably absent in the major body of literature, these missions were nonetheless guided by a widely accepted theory:

[T]he notion that promoting “liberalization” in countries that recently experienced civil war would help to create the conditions for a stable and lasting peace. In the political realm, liberalization means democratization, or the promotion of periodic and genuine elections, constitutional limitations on the exercise of governmental power, and respect for basic civil liberties, including freedom of speech, assembly, and conscience.²⁶

This promotion of liberalisation or Liberal Peace agenda shows some remarkable flaws when we look at the track record of peacebuilding missions after the Cold War. Paris concludes that these policies not only failed “to produce stable and

²³ Paris, Roland, ‘Saving liberal peacebuilding’, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36 (2010), pp. 337-365

²⁴ Boutros-Ghali, Boutros, *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping* (New York, United Nations, 1992)

²⁵ Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, p. 11

²⁶ Paris, *At War's End*, p. 5

lasting peace in most of the countries that hosted the missions,”²⁷ they were also founded on the overly optimistic belief that liberalisation had pacifying effects on post-conflict societies. In short, the liberalisation process exacerbated rather than moderated these conflicts.²⁸

Highlighting the problems of the Liberal Peace thesis itself, Paris accedes to the same group of scholars that started to question and criticise this thesis and its policy implications. Within this group however, he noted that the pendulum of criticism has occasionally been swinging “past the point of justified questioning and, in some quarters, now verges on unfounded scepticism and even cynicism.”²⁹ Fearing a radical rejection of the peacebuilding enterprise as a whole and a refuge in inaction that it inevitably entails, Paris aims to look for what he defines as “alternatives *within* liberal peacebuilding”³⁰ that do not blindly defend the current international practices. Largely influenced by high profile failures of intervention, these hypercritics, according to Paris, argue to have exposed peacebuilding as “a form of Western or liberal imperialism.”³¹ Critics like David Chandler (among others) radically claim that “liberal peacebuilding was hiding a deeper and more destructive purpose: imperial or quasi-imperial domination.”³² Swapping sound criticism for radical cynicism, which objects any form of intervention, the causes of harm are left unaffected.

Paris’s enterprise is ambitious yet subtle: on the one hand, he acknowledges the shortcomings of the prevailing Liberal Peace framework, while on the other hand, he intends to modify or improve this framework instead

²⁷ Ibid, p. 175

²⁸ Ibid, p. 176

²⁹ Paris, *Saving Liberal Peacebuilding*, p. 338

³⁰ Ibid, p. 339

³¹ Ibid, p. 344

³² Ibid, p. 345

of lapsing into hyper-critical theorising. In that regard, it is important to disentangle the many flawed understandings that a failure to differentiate between different forms of liberal intervention generates. Paris lists five recurring mistakes.³³ In short, he urges not to confuse intervention with invasion, to hold the echoes of colonialism for mere equivalence, and to take into consideration both the positive outcomes of intervening as the negative consequences when refraining from doing so. Especially the risk of getting ‘dirty hands’ by doing nothing is not negligible in the context of the intervention dilemma.

Constrained by a lack of a “realistic or preferable alternative” to the liberal peacebuilding framework, we have to “reform existing approaches within a broadly liberal framework.”³⁴ To get an idea of what this might imply, Paris reverts to classical liberal theorists, like for instance Kant and Locke.³⁵ Contrary to contemporary liberal theorists, they provided the Liberal Peace thesis with a foundational framework for properly functioning state institutions. In a reaction to Hobbes’s *Leviathan*,³⁶ they sought to transform this central authority into an “effective and limited government.”³⁷ Although they opposed Hobbes’s all-powerful monster that completely stood above society, they nonetheless recognised the necessity of a central authority to uphold the rule of law and protect its society from foreign and domestic threats. Put differently, they “did not dispense with the Leviathan. They tamed it.”³⁸

³³ Ibid, pp. 347-354

³⁴ Paris, *Saving Liberal Peacebuilding*, p. 362

³⁵ Paris, Roland, ‘Bringing the Leviathan Back In: Classical versus Contemporary Studies of the Liberal Peace’, *International Studies Review*, vol. 8 (2006), pp. 425-440

³⁶ Hobbes, Thomas, *Leviathan* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968)

³⁷ Paris, *Bringing the Leviathan Back In*, p. 427

³⁸ Ibid, p. 427

Whereas these classical theorists saw functioning state institutions as a precondition for peace, contemporary theorists tend to take the state and its proper functioning institutions for granted. This institutional framework is necessary however, for it acts as the most effective guardian against any attempt to defy the principles of liberalisation. Paris's alternative is therefore Institutionalisation Before Liberalisation (IBL). Building sustainable state institutions should precede typical liberal reforms like democratic elections and market-oriented reforms. Furthermore, these implementations should be introduced incrementally; making it less attractive but more effective than the 'quick and dirty' approach of plain liberalisation. IBL does not reject the goals of liberalisation but seeks to reach them through different, more effective means. Its main argument is that, in post-conflict societies, stability through institutionalisation is more important than implementing political and economic freedom.³⁹ This approach consists of six steps that all have to be met before liberalisation can be introduced.⁴⁰ Summarised, they call for the establishing of moderate political parties, the introduction of election rules that encourage moderation, the development of a civil society, the regulation of hate speech, the promotion of economic reforms that moderate social tension, and the development of a neutral bureaucracy.

Eventually, Paris defends this approach from potential critics by stressing the absence of realistic alternatives. More so, he considers it to be impossible to come up with alternatives that work outside the liberal framework. We should therefore seek to modify and improve the existing liberal framework to

³⁹ Paris, *At War's End*, p. 187

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 188-207

peacebuilding instead of trying to transcend it or completely reject the whole peacebuilding enterprise. This argument will foster critical reactions, most notably from David Chandler, who argues that most Liberal Peace critics are profoundly uncritical of the notion of intervention.

1. 2. The Uncritical Critique of Liberal Peace

Assessing Paris' IBL framework, Chandler heckles the dogmatic acceptance of the underlying assumptions of an approach that heavily relies on the primacy of institutionalisation and external regulation. "The assumption is that the problems of politics can be resolved outside the realm of the political, in the realms of law, social policy, and administration."⁴¹ By externally managing non-Western states through the postponement of liberalisation – "i.e. opening up the political process to democratic competition"⁴² – this process can be defined, Chandler argues, as "peace without politics[.]"⁴³

Moreover, these policies have quite ironic outcomes because, on the one hand, they want to "prevent (non-Western) state sovereignty from giving impunity to tyrants and human rights-abusing governments" while on the other hand, (Western) "states have acquired much greater sovereign powers to intervene in the domestic affairs of the other states."⁴⁴ Inevitably, this

⁴¹ Chandler, David, *Empire In Denial: The Politics of State-Building* (London, Pluto Press, 2006), p. 56

⁴² Chandler, *Empire In Denial*, p. 56

⁴³ Ibid, p. 56

⁴⁴ Chandler, David, 'Back to the future? The limits of neo-Wilsonian ideals of exporting democracy', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 32 (2006), p. 489

reintroduces a “return to the pre-UN era of Westphalian ‘might makes right’.”⁴⁵ Implied here is the peacebuilder’s rejection of the domestic political sphere as an independent and constitutive sphere in favour of international institutions that pretend to transcend state interests. This claim is strengthened by the recent shift of attention to “new ‘human security’ doctrines where the focus is no longer on the defence of states but upon the rights of individuals wherever they might be in the world.”⁴⁶ In *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention*,⁴⁷ Chandler stresses the limited critique of this radical shift towards human rights-based interventionism.

Even so, this shift gradually transformed into a framework that came to be known as *The Responsibility to Protect* (R2P)⁴⁸, in which the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty claims they have constructed a perspective based on morality as opposed to power or *realpolitik*.⁴⁹ They unambiguously subscribe to the shift towards human security by arguing “that individual human rights ‘trump’ the rights of sovereignty”⁵⁰ What is most noteworthy about this argument is that, by establishing a language of “sovereignty as responsibility”⁵¹, it seeks to bridge the divide between state sovereignty and intervention as it was established in the post-1945 political framework.

⁴⁵ Chandler, *Back to the future*, p. 489

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 488

⁴⁷ Chandler, David, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention* (London, Pluto Press, 2002)

⁴⁸ International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect: Research, Bibliography, Background* (Ottawa, International Development Research Centre, 2001), pp.129–138

⁴⁹ Chandler, David, ‘The Responsibility to protect? Imposing the ‘Liberal Peace’’, *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 11 (2004), p. 62

⁵⁰ Chandler, *The Responsibility to protect*, p. 64

⁵¹ R2P, p. 136

Instead of providing a clear and legally embedded framework placed under UN authority, Chandler argues, “the end product can only be vague and ambitious ‘ethical checklists’ [that] can easily be used to further erode the need for UN authorization.”⁵² Eventually, the commission came up with a list of six criteria that have to be satisfied in order to justify military intervention: “just cause, right intention, right authority, last resort, proportional means, and reasonable prospect.”⁵³ The strong resemblance with a similar checklist from the tradition of Just War theory should not be dismissed as mere coincidence.

The heart of the problem, according to Chandler, is that this morally constituted justification of intervention is dangerously susceptible of being hijacked by less ethical agendas. “It would appear that the advocates of the Liberal Peace do not have a monopoly on the morality of putting needs of victims first.”⁵⁴ Chandler clarifies this statement by referring to the agenda of the Bush administration, which used moral universalism to justify an agenda based on U.S. power and realpolitik after 11 September 2001.⁵⁵ When juridical and political frameworks are failing, the “morally-based ideas of the ‘liberal peace’”⁵⁶ could step in as justifications of interventionism. Furthermore, the commission’s assumption that ‘right makes might’ is in this context little different from the notion of ‘might makes right’ that constitutes realpolitik.⁵⁷

Applied to a more radical critique of the Liberal Peace thesis, the underlying assumptions of this thesis, that have now found their way into mainstream political consensus like the R2P framework on intervention, can

⁵² Ibid, p. 69

⁵³ Ibid, p. 69

⁵⁴ Chandler, *The Responsibility to protect*, p. 73

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 73

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 75

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 76

easily be used for quite different agendas. This should be of considerable importance when assessing claims to intervene or not. But Chandler goes even further and this is where his critique of the Liberal Peace thesis is articulated in its boldest form. Let us start from the common assertion among most Liberal Peace critics that this thesis uncritically accepts the universalisation of Western liberal frameworks. These scholars started to engage this assumption when international peacekeeping interventions in the 1990's did not seem to reap the expected success. What they took to be the central problem of these policies is the tendency to impose the agenda of "the reconstruction of 'Westphalian' frameworks of state sovereignty; the liberal framework of individual rights and winner-takes all-elections; and neoliberal free market economic programmes."⁵⁸ But this is not the key issue. More problematic is that they have moved from analysing the notion of intervention to the framework of liberalism that constitutes the implementation of this notion.⁵⁹ What is absent in these forms of critical engagement is a "critical validation of [the] intervener's own fictions, in which they are agents of a liberal world order."⁶⁰ The prevailing argument is that the policies of liberal peacebuilding are mostly *too* liberal and should therefore be modified. More conservative critiques of liberalism, like Paris's, are "not a critique of interventionist policy-making but rather a defence of current practices on the basis that they have not been properly applied or understood."⁶¹ That is why they focus so heavily on institutional reform as a more effective way

⁵⁸ Chandler, David, *International Statebuilding: The Rise of Post-Liberal Governance* (Routledge, Abingdon, 2010), p. 22

⁵⁹ Campbell et al, *A Liberal Peace?*, p. 3

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 7

⁶¹ Chandler, *International Statebuilding*, p. 39

of implementing this liberal agenda and reaching the goals of liberalisation by more efficient means.

Chandler exposes the critique that liberal peacebuilding is too liberal as “a self-serving and fictional policy narrative.”⁶² There is an undeniable tendency to frame the problem of intervention as a problem of the dichotomous relationship between the liberal self and the non-liberal other. The failure of implementing liberal policies in non-liberal societies because these policies are too liberal strongly implies the irreconcilability of both frameworks and so paints the non-liberal other as a barrier to peace. What might be added is that the presumption, “that markets and democracy could not work without external institutional intervention”⁶³ actually fosters the pessimistic attitude towards the capabilities of the non-liberal other.

On a more fundamental level, this argument seems to be undermining liberalism from within. Overly focussing on institutional reforms, eventually leads to negligence of the original idea of liberating a society.

The focus on institutional solutions [...] to the problems of conflict and transition is indicative of the narrowing down of aspirations from transforming society to merely regulating or managing it [...]. This is a long way from the promise of liberal transformation and the discourse of ‘liberating’ societies economically and politically.⁶⁴

By promoting an institutional agenda of external regulation, reform, and governance over a classic agenda of liberalisation, democratisation, and free market economics because it is too liberal, policymakers have not only severely lowered their expectations of the non-liberal other, who is helpless “unless

⁶² Chandler, *International Statebuilding*, p. 23

⁶³ Chandler, David, “The uncritical critique of ‘liberal peace’”, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36 (2010), p. 147

⁶⁴ Chandler, *The uncritical critique*, pp. 146-147

tutored by international experts”⁶⁵; more importantly, they have abandoned any hope or prospect of building a “liberal international order.”⁶⁶ Rather than an order that benefits the interest of the West, this order, according to liberal theory, is one that promotes and protects each state’s right of sovereignty and autonomy. Instead of a so-called Westphalian State, the policies of intervention have in doing so reproduced a state that is “increasingly reduced to an administrative level, in which sovereignty no longer marks a clear boundary line between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’.”⁶⁷ This has lead liberal peacebuilders a long way from their initial goals: by focusing on institutional capacity building rather than promoting democracy and development, the likelihood of creating a peaceful liberal world order is profoundly decreased. Because the non-liberal other is declared to be irreconcilable with liberal norms and values, the argument is made that there is “a need for greater international engagement in the state institutions”⁶⁸ that eventually will enable the introduction of these norms and values although they, ironically, are held to be exceeding realistic expectations.

Chandler notes the absence of critical alternatives to the prevailing policies of liberal intervention and peacebuilding. This is caused by an emphasis on the flaws of liberalism instead of a critical engagement with the notion of interventionism itself. More so, these interventions are not necessarily liberal universalist but rather “mechanisms of control and ordering.”⁶⁹ In summary, critiques of the Liberal Peace, like Paris’s IBL, are profoundly uncritical when it comes to the assumption of intervention. In addition, emphasising on

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 147

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 149

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 149

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 150

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 156

institutionalisation instead of liberalisation, these policies no longer intend to create a Liberal Peace and so create externally regulated societies, incapable of self-determination and irreconcilable with liberal norms and values. This shatters the liberalisation project from within.

At its most basic level, Chandler's critique assesses the underlying consequences of not only the Liberal Peace thesis, but most of its critics as well. By reverting to the widely accepted shift towards human-centred approaches within both academic scholarship and field-oriented policies, he eventually exposes the erosion of the Westphalian system of states as the most severe implication of his adversaries' uncritical stance. Rather than defend a conservative preservation of this system and the defence of its problematic consequences, he points to the arbitrary deconstruction of post-1945 rights of non-intervention and state sovereignty that is entailed in this cosmopolitan turn.⁷⁰ The notion of an upcoming framework of individual rights challenging the prevailing framework of sovereign rights is one of the central assumptions of cosmopolitan thought. The problem with this approach however, is that this assertion has a utopian undertone, for "there is more attention to the ethical ends of cosmopolitan democracy than there is to the mechanisms and means of ensuring these."⁷¹ The individual rights thereby risk becoming fictitious and separate the rights from their subject. The problem is that such rights without subject tend to challenge the existing rights, like those for sovereign autonomy, non-intervention, and self-government.⁷² In the case of liberal peacebuilding, these rights are undermined by the concept of sovereign inequality, although

⁷⁰ Chandler, David, 'New Rights for Old? Cosmopolitan Citizenship and the Critique of State Sovereignty', *Political Studies*, vol. 51 (2003), pp. 332-349

⁷¹ Chandler, *New Rights for Old*, p. 339

⁷² Ibid, p. 341

according to international law, non-liberal states benefit from the same legitimacy and international rights as their liberal counterparts.⁷³

To justify this argument, Chandler argues that cosmopolitan liberals tend to undermine democratic norms by regarding decisions based on the majority of the population as “not necessarily the final arbiter of democracy[.]”⁷⁴ Once again, this agenda of liberal imposition undermines its own goals and, like the institutional critics of the Liberal Peace thesis, these cosmopolitan liberals tend to be moving “above the sphere of democracy.”⁷⁵ Chandler once more invokes the absence of an alternative, this time defining it as the central problem of the cosmopolitan argument: on the one hand, the moral justification of the state system is challenged as it naturally encourages human suffering, though on the other hand, no valuable alternative is presented, setting up a “scenario where intervention is the prerogative of the powerful against the weak.”⁷⁶ Chandler concludes we are once again presented with a case of might makes right. The lack of a universal juridical framework enables the powerful to determine when intervention is justified or not.

1. 3. Throwing the Baby Out With the Bathwater?

While remaining loyal to both these authors’ respective arguments, the aim of this chapter was to put forward two differing approaches to the Liberal Peace

⁷³ Ibid, p. 343

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 344

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 344

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 346

thesis. Even so, there are some important similarities worth considering, especially if one is to prevent any polarised entrenchment of this debate. Namely, both Paris and Chandler consider themselves critics of the Liberal Peace thesis. This is partially a matter of degree, as Paris opposes Chandler's radical criticism whereas the latter might argue that the former's argument is profoundly uncritical when it comes to intervention. However, they nonetheless wish to undo or assess the unfortunate consequences of Liberal Peace practices. Ironically, they both stress the absence of an alternative approach. The key question, of course, is alternative to what? Paris on the one hand seriously doubts any possibility of working outside the existing liberal framework and therefore seeks to improve that framework rather than transcend it. Chandler on the other hand, seems to be excluding the likelihood of transcending the international system of sovereign states. More so, he criticises the undermining challenge that cosmopolitan thought poses to this order, as it will deprive weaker states from the rights they inherently possess in the contemporary international order.

Paris is most likely aware of the necessity of improving what can be done about pressing world issues. He urges us not to engage the existing framework too radically, for we might risk throwing out the baby with the bathwater. The absence of an alternative might not be a coincidence so we should put all our efforts in improving the framework we have. This whole endeavour, according to Chandler, not only seems to be undermining its own assumptions, but its long-term consequences are yet to be evaluated. What remains after Chandler's sweeping criticism is the question of how we can engage these issues. How can we possibly address the issues that are at stake without lapsing into the flaws of

the Liberal Peace framework? In order to address this question in detail, it is essential to look at the deeper voices that seem to be lurking in this debate. Chandler's reference to cosmopolitanism opens up an underlying debate about the moral value of state borders and the question of how they can justify structural abuse of human rights. In the next chapter, the transition will therefore be made to the more fundamental debate between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism, which has to clarify why the intervention dilemma is so persistent.

Part II

The Catch 22 in

The Cosmopolitan-Communitarian Debate

This dissertation began with the observation that there seems to be a perpetual dilemma when it comes to the question of intervening or not. This dilemma precludes us from choosing between two opposing options. On the one hand, the option is to engage with pressing issues such as conflict and injustice by intervening in other societies and so inevitably trample norms of sovereignty and non-intervention. On the other hand, clinging to these norms too heavily not only exposes moral indifference to the issues at hand, it also questions the moral value of the boundaries; which is the essential point of debate between the two above-mentioned groups. In order to reach a better and more thorough understanding of this apparent juxtaposition, it has to be related to the debate between cosmopolitans and communitarians in political theory. Additionally, highlighting the main characteristics of this debate can shed more light on what constitutes the pluralist-solidarist dichotomy in the English School. Similar to this dichotomy, cosmopolitans and communitarians “sit within a common horizon that is anchored in the twin pillars of liberty and equality.”⁷⁷ Richard Shapcott defines the central point of debate as follows:

⁷⁷ Shapcott, Richard, *International Ethics: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010), p. ix

The primary issue at stake in these debates is whether human beings ought to be considered as one single moral community, or as a collection of separate communities, each with their own ethical standards.⁷⁸

Not only does this shine a brighter light on what communitarianism might mean, it also embeds the discussion into the issue of whether boundaries have an ethical foundation. The second part of this dissertation will delve deeper into contemporary theorists who have addressed this topic and can therefore be roughly placed on one of both sides of the cosmopolitan-communitarian divide. The point is to establish a comprehensive understanding of this dichotomy, as it might provide us with a better grasp of why the debate among Liberal Peace critics like Paris and Chandler is not likely to gain an immediate and permanent outcome without looking at the underlying assumption that constitutes this debate.⁷⁹

2. 1. Cosmopolitanism-communitarianism

In *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches*, Chris Brown relates the dichotomy between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism to the moral and political philosophies of Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. It is especially their competing arguments on the foundations of morality that are to be considered as constitutive aspects of the aforementioned dichotomy. The following section will therefore only assess what is held to be

⁷⁸ Shapcott, *International Ethics*, p. 8

⁷⁹ This is not to say that Paris and Chandler are, strictly spoken, cosmopolitan or communitarian.

essential in the context of a genealogical analysis of the cosmopolitan-communitarian divide. Furthermore, the argument will follow Chris Brown's and Richard Shapcott's assessments of these two philosophers rather than founding the argument on the primary sources. As a result, the transition will be made to more contemporary cosmopolitan and communitarian thinkers while gradually assessing the question if these two positions can ever be reconciled.

2. 1. 1. Cosmopolitanism: The Moral Value of Our Shared Humanity

Regarded as one of the founding theorists of cosmopolitan thought, Immanuel Kant's famous categorical imperative, as a universal guidance of our moral action, is held to be the most starkest formulation of the cosmopolitan ideal: "*Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as means, but always as an end.*"⁸⁰ According to Shapcott, Kant's central thought is that "humans *can* and *should* form a universal (that is global) moral community." ⁸¹ This does not necessarily imply the formation of a world government but rather the importance of a "legal order based on universal rights and duties."⁸² Central to this argument is a direct challenge to the moral significance of boundaries between communities, between insiders and outsiders, between us and them. Kant's importance to

⁸⁰ Kant, cited by Brown, *International Relations Theory*, p. 30

⁸¹ Shapcott, *International Ethics*, p. 26

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 26

cosmopolitan thought is therefore undeniable because this challenge lies at the heart of nearly every cosmopolitan argument. The idea of a “universal or a priori inclusion in the ethical realm”⁸³ implies that “individual human beings are the prime concern of morality.”⁸⁴ Individuals, as Kant noted, should be treated as ends in themselves and they therefore, regardless of their nationality or place in the world, “deserve equal moral respect because they all share morally significant qualities.”⁸⁵ According to Thomas Pogge, there are three main principles in cosmopolitan thought:

First, *individualism*: the ultimate units of concern are *human beings*, or *persons* [...]. Second, *universality*: the status of ultimate unit of concern attaches to *every* living human being *equally* [...]. Third, *generality* [...]: [p]ersons are ultimate units of concern *for everyone* – not only for their compatriots, fellow religionists, or such like.⁸⁶

Even though the emphasis and interpretation is likely to change among them, these three notions return in any form of cosmopolitan argument.

Although both the amount of cosmopolitan theorists and the different strands of cosmopolitanism are quite considerable, Shapcott nonetheless makes an important distinction between Kantian and Rawlsian forms. Whereas the former puts emphasis on the “universal processes of consent and deliberation between real people”⁸⁷, the latter is to be situated within a contractarian tradition of political philosophy. These differences notwithstanding, they both thrive on an imperative of duty: like Kant’s deontology of the categorical imperative, Rawls’s contractarian foundation to justice has a similar appeal to

⁸³ Ibid, p. 15

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 20

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 20

⁸⁶ Pogge, Thomas W., *World Poverty and Human Rights: Cosmopolitan Responsibilities and Reforms* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2008), p. 175

⁸⁷ Shapcott, *International Ethics*, p. 43

duty. The sense of duty that drives our moral action is a standard element within cosmopolitan philosophy. Moreover, this duty is twofold: a negative duty that wants to tackle international and structural causes of injustice on the one hand, and a positive duty that seeks to assess human rights violations, if necessary by intervention on the other. Combined, these duties heavily argue for taking action when harm is being done, internationally or domestically.

Furthermore, cosmopolitans directly challenge the prevailing political and economical order of sovereign states and institutions. This argument is founded on the work of John Rawls. In order to obtain an impression of this influence, Rawl's *A Theory of Justice* is without a doubt a designated starting point. In this work, Rawls sought, firstly, to construct the principles of justice upon which a well-ordered society should be founded and, secondly, to underpin this concept with necessary institutions. Eventually, it would turn out as a considerable answer to the perpetual debate between freedom and equality.⁸⁸ Relying on social contract theory, he argued that if all people were deprived of any form of knowledge about their social status (nationality, gender, race, health, wealth) behind a so-called veil of ignorance, they would agree upon principles that treated all human beings as equals.⁸⁹ In short, Rawls deduced two principles from this "original position[.]"⁹⁰ The first states that every human being has "equal basic liberties"⁹¹ which cannot be prescribed but have to be "compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for others."⁹² The only constraint these liberties have to take into account is that they by no means can affect the liberties of other

⁸⁸ Audard, Catherine, *John Rawls* (Stocksfield, Acumen Publishing Limited, 2007), pp. 6-7

⁸⁹ Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 17

⁹⁰ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 17

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 53

⁹² Ibid, p. 53

people. The second principle therefore states that “social and economic inequalities” are only tolerable to the extent that they are in “everyone’s advantage” and that positions and offices are open to all.⁹³ What the application of the latter principle entails is “the distribution of income and wealth”⁹⁴ to everyone’s advantage. More specifically, inequalities are only tolerable as long as they benefit the least advantaged in society. The balance between liberty and equality hereby ought to be maintained.

However, it is important to note that Rawls perceived a lexical order between these two principles which requires us to satisfy the first principles in the ordering before we can move to the second.⁹⁵ It is important to keep this in mind when one turns to Charles Beitz’s application of Rawls’s domestic principles on an international scale. In *Political Theory and International Relations*,⁹⁶ Beitz argues that a similar veil of ignorance on an international scale would enforce an international principle of redistribution of wealth among nations, obliging prosperous states to share their resources with the rest of the world. The flaw in his argument is that it violates the first principle of liberty and neglects the importance of the lexical order.

Thomas Pogge, on the other hand, made a rather different argument. In *World Poverty and Human Rights*, he argues a strong point for reforming the international economical system if we want to combat global poverty. He makes a compelling argument by exposing the “juxtaposition of great progress in our moral norms and conduct with a rather catastrophic moral situation on the

⁹³ Ibid, p. 53

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 53

⁹⁵ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 53-54

⁹⁶ Beitz, Charles R., *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1979)

ground”⁹⁷ as a result of the Western states that are “crushing economic, political, and military dominance over a world in which effective enslavement and genocides continue unabated.”⁹⁸

In order to undo this structural harm, Pogge outlines an approach that explores the viability of a different path to globalisation, “involving political as well as economic integration,” and allowing every human being “to share the benefits of global economic growth.”⁹⁹ In other words, the observance that our international system is harming the poor is provided with a cosmopolitan solution: we have to reform this system structurally in accordance with the notion of human rights. A Rawlsian echo is heard when Pogge constructs this argument on the appeal of our responsibility.¹⁰⁰ By hiding behind the status quo, we continue to harm the poor structurally on a global scale, Pogge argues. A resort to communal isolation under the ideal of non-intervention would therefore have no positive effect on the sort of injustice Pogge is referring to. Similar to Paris, Pogge argues that non-intervention can generate ‘dirty hands’ as well.

In addition, cosmopolitans assess another issue wherein inaction has the effect of causing harm rather than preventing it, namely when human suffering is not caused by the injustice of the international system. The cosmopolitan individual is unlikely to neglect victims from genocide, civil war, or other forms of violence or conflict and he will therefore reflect on the most effective means to

⁹⁷ Pogge, *World Poverty*, p. 3

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19

¹⁰⁰ A more explicit account of Pogge’s Rawlsian cosmopolitanism can be found in *Realizing Rawls* (Pogge, Thomas W., *Realizing Rawls* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1989)). In *World Poverty and Human Rights*, however, Pogge engages in a more ambitious project that is less an application of Rawls’s principles.

tackle these issues. What is commonly described as humanitarian intervention is regarded as a possible answer to these pressing issues, provided there are a few criteria that need to be respected in order to prevent mindless justification of any form of intervention. According to Shapcott, humanitarian intervention represents the “shift from negative to positive cosmopolitan duties[.]”¹⁰¹ Related to Just War Theory (JWT), cosmopolitans have sought to construct a framework that enables justified intervention. JWT’s cosmopolitan grounding is most notable when it is argued that intervention is necessitated by the denial or violation of human rights. Since we have a moral duty to prevent human rights violations, cosmopolitans argue, humanitarian intervention is justified when these issues can be tackled effectively.

In this context, Simon Caney argues that because “all persons have duties to respect and protect [...] human rights, it follows that intervention is justified when it could successfully protect these rights.”¹⁰² In order to prevent more harm being done, Caney sets up a framework of JWT-inspired criteria. These include the following: there has to be a violation of economic and/or political human rights, the intervention has to be proportional with regard to the initial harm, it has to be the last resort only when the alternatives have more negative outcomes, there has to be a reasonable chance of a positive outcome, and it has to be executed by the proper authority.¹⁰³ If these criteria are met, humanitarian intervention is justified and the likelihood of taking on the form of a cosmopolitan crusade is minimised. Once again, the whole argument is framed in terms of rights and duties. These should be equal to all human beings and

¹⁰¹ Shapcott, *International Ethics*, p. 177

¹⁰² Caney, Simon, *Justice Beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 235

¹⁰³ Caney, *Justice Beyond Borders*, pp. 248-250

borders are not allowed to pose constraints to them. This thought will form the most central point of disagreement with the communitarians who severely challenge the cosmopolitan's core assumption of moral universalism.

2. 1. 2. Communitarianism: The Embeddedness of Our Moral Values

Communitarian thought is, like its cosmopolitan counterpart, grounded in a specific conception of morality that constituted itself as a countermovement to cosmopolitanism. G. W. F. Hegel's philosophy was partly formulated in reaction to the prevailing philosophy of Kant that cherished moral universalism and individualism. Hegel objected to the pure formality of the Kant's philosophy and denied the possibility "to think of individuals [...] in isolation from the community that has shaped them and constituted them as individuals[.]"¹⁰⁴ Now because of the embeddedness of individuals in their community, Hegel differentiates abstract morality from ethics, i.e. "concrete morality of a rational order where rational institutions and laws provide the content of conscientious conviction."¹⁰⁵ Political community, in the form of the modern state, "is the culmination of history, superior to all previous social forms, because it is only within the modern state that an ethical life which allows freedom for all is realised."¹⁰⁶ In other words, though Hegel shares the same Kantian ideal of

¹⁰⁴ Hegel, summarised by Brown, *International Relations Theory*, p. 62

¹⁰⁵ Hegel, cited by Brown, *International Relations Theory*, p. 62

¹⁰⁶ Hegel, summarised by Brown, *International Relations Theory*, p. 62

freedom for all, he deems the modern state as its most necessary condition. The state provides the individual with rules that order the relations among people, thereby replacing the separateness of civil society with communitarian unity.

When we assess the notion of communitarianism, Hegel's argument as formulated in opposition to Kant's is by no means coincidental. To begin with, there seems to be a notable absence of a unified theory of communitarianism. Even the name has not gained widespread agreement. This reactionary foundation of communitarianism implies that there are rather loosely coherent groups of theories or approaches that share a critical attitude towards the central arguments of cosmopolitanism. At their core, these approaches "claim that morality is always local, and therefore that cosmopolitanism is both impossible (impractical) and undesirable[.]"¹⁰⁷ Morality and its meaning, these voices claim, are derived from the cultural communities to which we belong. Shapcott defines two main expressions of what he defines as anti-cosmopolitanism: realism and pluralism.¹⁰⁸ In the remainder of this part, both these groups of critics will be addressed and, subsequently, the question will be raised what the implication might be for cosmopolitan's negative and positive duties.

Realism, as one of the prevailing theories in IR, is mostly known for its critique of morality in favour of power. It is this critical assessment of the relationship between morality and power that leads them to "a recognition of the normative pluralism characterising the international realm and a scepticism towards progressivist account of international life."¹⁰⁹ Realists define the field of

¹⁰⁷ Shapcott, *International Ethics*, p. 51

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 51

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 61

IR as an anarchical system of sovereign states. Any reference to moral principles is exposed as serving state interests in some way or another. But they are also concerned about maintaining an order of balance and stability. “Such an order is a prerequisite for the security and stability of the communities which make it up.”¹¹⁰ In other words, most realists are communitarians but not all communitarians are realists.

However, realism’s emphasis on an order of sovereign communities is a concern that can also be attributed to pluralism. It is here that the similarity between pluralist and solidarist strands of thought in the English School on the one hand and the cosmopolitan-communitarian divide on the other hand, is to be located. As mentioned in the introduction, pluralism can be regarded as the strongest challenge to cosmopolitanism’s universalising aspirations. Contemporary pluralists, like David Miller and Michael Walzer, argue that “cosmopolitanism requires the universalization of a particular account of the good and the overriding of particular understandings and ‘shared ways of life’[.]”¹¹¹ They heavily stress the moral significance of equality, preventing the imposition of the moral principles of one community over those of another. Eventually, this leads to the moral significance of recognising identity and difference.

To be human is to have a culture, and to belong to a community less than the species is to identify with one’s community of origin or belonging. Therefore, the way to realise this goal is to preserve and recognize these cultural differences.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 68

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 69

¹¹² Ibid, p. 69

The impracticability of cosmopolitanism, as Chandler states, is mainly due to the significant differences between communities, be it cultural, statist, or religious. This pluralism inhibits any prospect of a universally accepted notion of the good life or of the nature of justice. Morality, in other words, is context-sensitive and our duties only go as far as our identity, shared culture, and moral conceptions reach. According to Michael Walzer, a universal community of humanity is therefore inherently unrealistic. “The crucial commonality of the human race is particularism: we participate, all of us, in thick cultures that are our own.”¹¹³

This latter thought poses severe limits to the positive and negative duties cosmopolitanism so heavily endorses. If every moral concept is contextually rooted in a community, the idea of founding the basis for moral action on universal ideals suddenly becomes less evident. This clearly resonates in Chandler’s critique of the moral universalist foundations of R2P. Although most communitarians are by no means isolationists and some, like Walzer, have made considerable attempts to reconcile moral particularism with the notion of humanitarian intervention,¹¹⁴ the question remains how far this argument can be taken. From a pluralist rather than a statist or realist perspective, one might agree with a ‘live and let live’ principle that underpins the norm of no harm. Nevertheless, Pogge’s far-reaching argument for institutional reform on the basis of human rights is a problematic endeavour when founded on the universalising aspirations of the human rights framework. Yet even if one was able to succeed in such an attempt, the result would still be an international system of sovereign communities constrained by the principle of non-intervention. Isaiah Berlin’s

¹¹³ Walzer, Michael, *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad* (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), p. 83

¹¹⁴ Walzer, Michael, *Arguing about War* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2004)

distinction between positive and negative liberty with a preference for the latter seems to provoke moral indifference.¹¹⁵ This is what Edward S. Herman notices in the foreword to Chandler's *From Kosovo to Kabul*. It once more addresses the 'dirty hands' of non-intervention.

Negative liberty is not costless; in an independent society, 'leaving people alone' affects other people when those left alone [...] implement disinvestment policies that leave communities stranded. [...] The language of Isaiah Berlin [...] is the language of *laissez-faire* and neoliberalism.¹¹⁶

Even the ideal of negative liberty does not refrain one from remaining blind and indifferent to the harm that befalls these communities. The only way to prevent this outcome would then be to extend one's duties across boundaries and intervene within the confines of Caney's framework. But grounding this action on universal morality is a doomed enterprise because morality is always particular and cannot be extended across communal boundaries. More so, it would open the door for a complete rejection of intervention because if there are no moral justifications at stake, one could easily conclude that state interests are the true motivation behind intervening. And even if one does not concur with this realist argument, the lack of an alternative framework for addressing these issues is not a sufficient reason for justifying this one. If not moral indifference, moral relativism refrains us from taking action.

Attempts by Pogge and Caney to construct frameworks to prevent human rights violations on the basis of universal principles are directly challenged by the particularity and embeddedness of these principles and the imposing effect

¹¹⁵ Berlin, Isaiah, 'Two Concepts of Liberty', in Hardy, Henry (ed.), *Liberty: Isaiah Berlin* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 166-217

¹¹⁶ Herman, Edward S., 'Foreword', in Chandler, David, *From Kosovo to Kabul: Human Rights and International Intervention* (London, Pluto Press, 2002), p. ix-x

these policies would entail. However, it is important to note that John Rawls made a considerable attempt on his own to transcend the domestic towards the international realm when he gauged the principles of international justice. Widely neglected and mostly misunderstood, *The Law of Peoples* can be described as Rawls's effort to bridge the gap between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism.

2. 2. Overcoming the Catch 22?

Rawls disagreed with cosmopolitan attempts to apply the central principles of *A Theory of Justice* on the international realm. Along with the negative reception *The Law of Peoples* (LOP) fostered among cosmopolitans, this disagreement contributed to a widespread negligence of the latter work. More so, by falsely labelling it as communitarian, one might argue it has engendered misunderstanding as well. The aim of LOP is to start from the plurality of different conceptions of justice because failing to do so is what nourished communitarian critics. To the same extent that we start out from a liberal notion of justice, we have to acknowledge "different kinds of reasonable comprehensive doctrines"¹¹⁷ among communities other than our own. But this does not inevitably imply the relativism of pluralism. Rawls aims to extend the boundaries of what is realistically possible as far as possible.¹¹⁸ Put differently, he wants to

¹¹⁷ Williams, Huw Lloyd, *On Rawls, Development and Global Justice. The Freedom of Peoples* (Hampshire, Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), p.26

¹¹⁸ Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, p. 5-6

ascertain how far he can succeed in extending the cosmopolitan ideals without being vulnerable to the communitarian critique.

This exercise in balance is a recurring narrative throughout the work. Rawls focuses on peoples instead of individuals (like cosmopolitans) or states (like realist communitarians) and he seeks to construct an international framework that is not merely western on the one hand but still sets boundaries to toleration on the other hand. This framework, *The Law of Peoples*, is what “well-ordered peoples”¹¹⁹ would agree upon as “a particular political conception of right and justice[.]”¹²⁰ The crux of his reasoning is to see which peoples he counts as belonging to this society of well-ordered peoples. Blinded by their universalising aspirations, cosmopolitan liberals are unaware that their argument is not only unrealistic but risks justifying arrogance and imperialism as well.¹²¹ Communitarians on the other hand cling to the pluralist ideal and as such are blind to what happens within domestic society. A Society of Peoples therefore does not solely consist of liberal peoples but of decent peoples as well. Although the latter are not liberal they should nonetheless be tolerated:

[P]rovided a nonliberal society’s basic institutions meet certain specified conditions of political right and justice and lead its people to honor a reasonable and just law for the Society of Peoples, a liberal people is to tolerate and accept that society.¹²²

The notion of decent peoples presents itself as an alternative to cosmopolitan’s exclusionary standards of tolerance and communitarianism indifference towards intolerance. Even though elaborating on the content of this notion might be an

¹¹⁹ Ibid, p. 4

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 3

¹²¹ Audard, *Rawls*, p. 255

¹²² Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, p. 59-60

interesting endeavour, it would exceed the scope of the present enquiry. What is more important here is it to see how Rawls assumes the existence of non-liberal peoples or societies that nonetheless share some important norms and values with their liberal counterparts (for instance, respect for human rights that is embedded in the framework of domestic law). This thought is considerably more important, as it can refute the claim that human rights are a purely Western or liberal notion.¹²³

However, there are two other types of peoples Rawls distinguishes between.¹²⁴ Apart from liberal and decent peoples that form the Society of Peoples, there are burdened societies that are not *able* to join this society and outlaw states that are not *willing* to.¹²⁵ Whereas one might wonder what Rawls's criterion of differentiation is that enables him to make this distinction, the essential claim here is that well-ordered societies (liberal and decent) share a responsibility to provide assistance to burdened societies. At this point, Rawls's own reasoning mostly challenges his defence of non-intervention. Avoiding throwing out the baby with the bathwater, Rawls wants to prevent the moral ignorance of communitarianism by providing the Society of Peoples with a moral responsibility. This "duty of assistance"¹²⁶ has to pose limits to the norm of non-intervention without lapsing into cosmopolitan universalism and paternalism. Rawls therefore argues that there has to be a cut-off point in this assistance that has to assure political autonomy.¹²⁷ Posing limits to our responsibility is a clear contestation of Beitz's international distributive principle. Rawls namely holds

¹²³ Ibid, p. 68

¹²⁴ There is a fifth type, benevolent absolutisms, which will not be discussed here.

¹²⁵ Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, p. 4

¹²⁶ Ibid, p. 5

¹²⁷ Ibid, p. 118

liberal and decent peoples responsible for providing burdened societies with the necessary tools for joining the Society of Peoples. But as soon as this point is reached, all assistance has to be ceased for the preservation of political autonomy, allowing these societies to choose their own way in reaching the Society of Peoples.

This argument fostered much critique from a cosmopolitan perspective. Rawls' restrained positions towards non-liberal societies and low standards of toleration lead Simon Caney to argue that Rawls "allows racial discrimination, the political exclusion of ethnic minorities, [and] the forcible removal of members of some ethnic communities (that is, ethnic cleansing)."¹²⁸ Not only is there no such thing as an approval of the aforementioned horrors within LOP; it is this reading that seems to be missing the point. The duty of assistance actually provides us with the necessary tool to place The Law of Peoples in a more progressive light. Such a reading can be found in Huw Williams's *On Rawls, Development and Global Justice. The Freedom of Peoples*, in which the author exposes creeping cosmopolitanism in Rawls's treatment of the duty of assistance.¹²⁹ According to Williams, there is an undeniable convergence between The Law of Peoples and some of the cosmopolitan ideas.¹³⁰ One might argue that they both share the same norms and values, entrenched in the ideal of liberal democracy, but Rawls is more cautious to spread these for the fear of ethnocentrism. To avoid this, Rawls is willing to pay a high price in favour of tolerance. Although he undoubtedly wants to see progress towards liberal

¹²⁸ Caney, Simon, 'Survey Article: Cosmopolitanism and the Law of Peoples' *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, vol. 10 (2002), p. 102

¹²⁹ Williams, *On Rawls*, p. 179

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 200

societies (as he considers the liberal democratic framework inherently superior), he is aware that this conviction can be largely attributed to his comprehensive doctrine that belongs to the community that he takes part in. There should therefore be a creed of tolerance among political communities and their respective cultures. This urge for tolerance severely challenges any progressive reading of assistance. The only way to assist other societies without acting ethnocentric would be to provide neutral advice that, contrary to Paris's IBL approach, "does not favour the development of liberal institutions."¹³¹ However, Williams argues that, since we have the inevitable tendency from our own comprehensive doctrine to regard institution-building as democracy building, Paris's emphasis on the lack of an alternative thrusts itself into the argument once more. Rawls's whole endeavour is therefore on the verge of collapsing due to this insoluble tension.

We seem to be caught in a *Catch 22*: sit back and allow burdened societies to find their own way in reforming their institutions, and so renege on the duty of assistance, or provide them with advice and know-how, inevitably steeped in liberal and democratic traditions and values, and thereby fall foul of paternalism.¹³²

Rawls's attempt to bridge the gap between cosmopolitanism and communitarianism has actually made the dilemma between them more persistent and hopeless than before. It formulates quite clearly what was lurking in the first part of this dissertation. Paris wants to build institutions that could successfully implement liberalisation but is not aware of the cosmopolitan, and hence ethnocentric and paternalistic, policies this entails. Chandler therefore sought to expose this uncritical critique by claiming these policies are breaching

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 198

¹³² Ibid, p. 200 (Italics added.)

international norms of state sovereignty and non-intervention. This however, would be refusing to take on our responsibility and so hiding behind the moral relativism of the status quo. After a closer look at the underlying debate between cosmopolitans and communitarians, the stalemate between our duty to engage with others caused by our shared humanity on the one hand, and the notion of moral pluralism that severely limits any such engagement on the other hand, seems to be irreconcilable. A *Catch 22* between these two positions seems to be eternally contained within every argument. This in turn impedes any attempt at overcoming the intervention dilemma.

Part III

Towards a *Phronetic* Approach

There is however, a different strand of literature that has been addressing this topic from a diverging perspective. Both within the Liberal Peace debate and in the cosmopolitan-communitarian debate, there is a distinct narrative that is looking for a way to transcend the ever-recurring dilemma by shifting the scope on dialogue between communities. This cosmopolitanism of a different kind or dialogical communitarianism stresses the unsustainability of a strongly polarised debate between universalist cosmopolitans and relativist communitarians.¹³³

In the last part of this dissertation, a brief overview will be given of the main proponents of this argument. Broaching the work of Oliver P. Richmond in the Liberal Peace debate on the one hand, and Andrew Linklater and Richard Shapcott on the other will call the persistency of the intervention dilemma into question. Eventually, the importance these authors place on dialogue that takes into account the context of the everyday leads us to critically assess the endeavour of producing theoretical frameworks. The explication of this latter point in Chris Brown's and especially Bent Flyvbjerg's assessment of the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis* will form the conclusion of this last part.

¹³³ Linklater, Andrew, *The Transformation of Political Community* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1998), p. 95

3. 1. A Post-Liberal Peace?

Avoiding “over-reliance on predatory institutional frameworks”¹³⁴ while still engaging with others is the main challenge Oliver P. Richmond addresses in *A post-liberal peace: Eirenism and the everyday*. Acknowledging the crisis in liberal peacebuilding and its underlying thesis, he argues that we need to transcend this framework in search for a Post-Liberal Peace that bridges the gap between the liberal and the local (or non-liberal) subject. According to Richmond, the bankruptcy of the Liberal Peace is caused by its agenda “to reshape rather than engage with non-liberal others.”¹³⁵ There has to be an equality of respecting cultural differences that does not entail relativism. “What is missing is dialogue and communication”¹³⁶ that takes into account the everyday context of the local while maintaining “empathy, respect, and the recognition of difference.”¹³⁷ In other words, a Post-Liberal Peace framework puts dialogue between communities at its core and starts from the everyday context. Such a framework calls into question the moral significance of the Westphalian system of states that produces patterns of exclusion and tends to neglect this practical context. Rather than imply a complete rejection of boundaries, it proposes a critical assessment of the state system instead. This is the prospect of producing sustainable peace that bridges the local with the international.

¹³⁴ Richmond, Oliver P., ‘A post-liberal peace: Eirenism and the everyday’, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 35 (2009), p. 568

¹³⁵ Richmond, *A post-liberal peace*, p. 564

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 568

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 566

In other words, to gain an understanding of the 'indigenous' and everyday factors for the overall project of building peace, liberal or otherwise, a via media needs to be developed between emergent local knowledge and the orthodoxy of international prescription and assumptions about peace.¹³⁸

Negligence in engaging the everyday or local context is what jeopardises any form of peacebuilding, liberal or not. Like Chandler, Richmond argues that there is a need for "a system that protects difference"¹³⁹ and does not fail to engage the issues that matter in the context of local everyday. Inevitably, this calls for a more complex process of peacebuilding in which different relationships between different communities produce different forms of peace. Roger Mac Ginty defines this as a hybrid peace.¹⁴⁰

Eventually, a dialogical perspective on peace favours a balance between specific contexts and responsive international institutions over endless quarrels about rights and rules.¹⁴¹ As such, Richmond moves beyond abstract frameworks that fail to assess the local context. Building peace in this dialogical sense also produces emancipation. "This transcends Rawlsian liberal approaches [...] by focussing on self-government in which the citizen becomes the force in the process of peacebuilding."¹⁴²

The key question is how this ongoing process actually works. How does the engagement with the local work in the practical sense? Rejecting the blind application of frameworks, Richmond provides a set of requirements for peacebuilders. These suggest a consideration of the everyday life, the assessment of each case individually instead of blindly applying blueprints, placing human

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 571

¹³⁹ Ibid, p. 572

¹⁴⁰ Mac Ginty, Roger, 'Hybrid Peace: The Interaction Between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Peace', *Security Dialogue*, vol. 41 (2010), pp. 391-412

¹⁴¹ Richmond, *A post-liberal peace*, p. 574

¹⁴² Ibid, p. 578

needs first, and seeking open and free communication between post-conflict individuals and peace builders.¹⁴³ Any more specific guidelines would blur the distinction between multiple cases or contexts. He therefore argues that it is not in his interest to provide a universally applicable framework for peacebuilding.

This [i.e. a Post-Liberal Peace] would not be a new hegemonic 'ism' or a grand metanarrative, but instead would be a mechanism or lens through which it can be locally asked whether and how an action, conversation, or policy contributes to a mutual form of peace.¹⁴⁴

This enthralling argument that rejects the polarised dichotomy between the application of frameworks and devastating critiques of interventionism raises some interesting and indispensable questions. How does this conversation take place and under what circumstances? Which communities are involved? And what about the accusation that this call for dialogue is a liberally entrenched notion that does not escape ethnocentrism? These questions can only be tackled by relating the Liberal Peace debate to the cosmopolitan-communitarian divide that underpins it. This entrenchment has been disentangled by a so-called *thin* notion of cosmopolitanism that embraces dialogical communitarianism.

3. 2. Dialogical Politics

In *The Transformation of Political Community*, Andrew Linklater argues that a *thin* notion of cosmopolitanism is a viable alternative to *thick* cosmopolitanism,

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 579-580

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 580

for the latter cannot discard ethnocentrism and false universality. But we should not descend to moral relativism, he argues. We have to reflect on how others are excluded without making abstraction of our own context. “We have to start from where we are”¹⁴⁵, as Richard Rorty stated and it is exactly the absence of this realisation that produces thick cosmopolitanism’s flawed universalism. What challenges moral parochialism on the other hand, is similar to Pogge’s argument, a close consideration of the causes and consequences of transnational harm. “Transnational harm provides one of the strongest reasons for widening the boundaries of moral and political communities to engage outsiders in dialogue about matters which affect their vital interests.”¹⁴⁶ The stark dichotomy between communitarianism and cosmopolitanism is weakened by what Linklater defines as *dialogical politics* that combine the communitarian norm of starting from where you are and the cosmopolitan ideal of engaging with others. Not only is dialogue a prosperous means to tackle transnational harm, it also resolves the issue of ethnocentrism. By submitting “the logic of their own beliefs to the test of open dialogue with others”¹⁴⁷, the possible ethnocentricity of certain values or norms is critically assessed.

One could argue that Linklater extends Rawls’s Society of Peoples by widening “the circle of those who have rights to participate in dialogue[.]”¹⁴⁸ Richmond made a similar suggestion when stressing the importance of “a broader social contract, or more ambitiously, one that transcends liberal [...]

¹⁴⁵ Rorty, Richard, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 198

¹⁴⁶ Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community*, p. 84

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 86

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 96

biases.”¹⁴⁹ Dialogue transcends cultural differences without discarding them completely. Linklater’s widened circle of inclusion is grounded on Jürgen Habermas’ notion of *discourse ethics*, which holds that people should engage in dialogue without knowing who will learn from who, by reaching agreement based on the force of the better argument, taking into account the perspective of the other, and aiming to agree on universal principles.¹⁵⁰ In short, Linklater argues that “principles that bridge different cultures must result from unconstrained dialogue in which participants face each other as equals.”¹⁵¹

There is however, still an exclusionary pattern in this form of dialogue. According to Shapcott, Linklater’s Habermasian version of dialogical politics is exclusionary in two ways. Firstly, discourse ethics is unnecessarily restrictive and has a “legislative tendency because it excludes from conversation all statements, or all topics of conversation that are not oriented towards achieving universal redemption.”¹⁵² Only those voices that share the goal of moral universalism are included in the conversation. Secondly, it has a limited concept of agency because it argues that “moral conversation can only be conducted between post-conventional agents guided by the force of the better argument.”¹⁵³ This implies an exclusion of conventional agents that have more “traditional social practices and conceptions of the good life[.]”¹⁵⁴ Including these voices is tied to the notion of emancipation, one of the key concepts to critical theory. However, this seriously erodes equality, for the “other’s equality is only realised

¹⁴⁹ Richmond, *A post-liberal peace*, p. 558

¹⁵⁰ Linklater, Andrew, ‘Dialogic politics and the civilising process’, *Review of International Studies*, vol. 31 (2005), p. 142

¹⁵¹ Linklater, Andrew, ‘The Global Civilizing Role of Cosmopolitanism’, in Delanty, Gerard (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2012) Forthcoming

¹⁵² Shapcott, Richard, ‘Cosmopolitan Conversations: Justice Dialogue and the Cosmopolitan Project’, *Global Society* vol. 16 (2002), p. 228

¹⁵³ Shapcott, *Cosmopolitan Conversations*, p. 229

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 230

when they are emancipated[.]”¹⁵⁵ The intention, as Richmond previously stated, is to engage rather than reshape the other.

Shapcott nonetheless wants to preserve the advantageous elements of discourse ethics while eliminating some of its more problematic side effects. He embraces dialogical politics as it rejects the bifurcation between communitarianism and cosmopolitanism.¹⁵⁶ The strong and artificial polarisation between these two traditions of thought has not provided a workable solution. Dialogical politics could provide a viable alternative only if it was to be consolidated into a more inclusionary model that provides an “alternative understanding of conversation[.]”¹⁵⁷ This model is to be found in the hermeneutical philosophy of H.-G. Gadamer. Shapcott claims that inclusionary universalism of Gadamer’s hermeneutics is facilitated by its emphasis on understanding as a linguistic event that is necessarily dialogical.¹⁵⁸ The implication of Gadamer’s notion of understanding for Shapcott’s model of conversation is indicated by the central argument in Gadamer’s *Truth and Method*.¹⁵⁹ All knowledge is interpretation, Gadamer argues, because we experience the world through language and knowledge is therefore constituted linguistically. This implies that, in Heideggerian terms, our being-in-the-world is fundamentally linguistic. The scope of our knowledge and experience is therefore constrained by our “human situatedness”¹⁶⁰. These individual horizons

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 231

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 221

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 233

¹⁵⁸ Ibid; p. 233

¹⁵⁹ Gadamer, Hans-Georg, *Truth and Method. Second, Revised Edition* (London, Sheed & Ward Limited, 1975)

¹⁶⁰ Shapcott, *Cosmopolitan Conversations*, p. 234

merge through the notion of understanding into a “*fusion of horizons*[.]”¹⁶¹ In the process of dialogue, we broaden our horizon of knowledge and experience by engaging with each other. Conversation is thereby “a process of coming to an understanding”¹⁶² in which self and other are constituted as equals without ironing out differences or the uncertainty over which truth the other possesses and what one might learn through the conversation.¹⁶³

This notion of dialogue is radically inclusive for it lacks the restrictions of Habermasian discourse ethics. Reaching understanding through dialogue is “a capacity of *any* linguistically constituted agent.”¹⁶⁴ Agents are not required to be post-conventional or emancipated. What humans have in common is not a particular language but rather their linguistic situatedness and since this is a basic feature of human existence, their level of development is irrelevant. “Conversation is a property of all humans who possess language regardless of their situatedness.”¹⁶⁵ Moreover, there is no normative principle that excludes any conversation that is not oriented towards universal principles of moral life. It is more about “the *possibility* of agreement” than “*necessarily* revealing knowledge that is *universally* valid.”¹⁶⁶ A conversation is mainly directed towards understanding rather than a universal ideal. Eventually, this is the only way to bridge communal differences.

[I]n the absence of a final consensus or completed community of emancipated beings there is instead the task of living together in difference, a task which requires a mediation of means and ends, universal and particular and the

¹⁶¹ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 306

¹⁶² Ibid, p. 385

¹⁶³ Shapcott, *Cosmopolitan Conversations*, p. 235

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 237

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 239

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 240

pragmatic development of wisdom and understanding in which differences and agreements are worked through.¹⁶⁷

Rather than an endpoint of universal principles of morality, the process of conversation as a means to reach understanding should be the goal of dialogical politics. There is actually a resonance in this thought that rejects the founding principles of morality that both communitarianism and cosmopolitanism vehemently defend. Instead of clinging to these principles, dialogical politics goes beyond the dichotomy of moral relativism and universalism through the process of dialogical understanding. Another echo in Shapcott's argument is the notion of understanding *each other*, not only as a norm but also as a constitutive aspect of acquiring knowledge and experience. Applied to Richmond's notion of the everyday context, in dialogical politics we reach understanding by engaging with each other in an equal relationship that takes into account the situatedness of every conversant.

Even so, a rejection of universal frameworks in favour of dialogical politics that takes into account the everyday urges the critical mind to ponder how this ideal can be applied within a contextual situation. More so, what does this 'pragmatic development of wisdom and understanding' imply in concrete terms? A suitable answer to this question and the implication it has for frameworks of intervention and non-intervention might see Gadamer's notion of practical knowledge as a good starting point.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 242

3. 3. *Phronesis* and Power

Gadamer reintroduces the Aristotelian distinction between theoretical and practical knowledge or *phronesis*, describing the latter as “directed towards the concrete situation.”¹⁶⁸ It is not a rational conceptualisation of knowledge but rather an ethical virtue, asking the question what one ought to do or not and so presupposing a moral attitude that is absent in a rational account of knowledge.¹⁶⁹

In *The Nicomachean Ethics*,¹⁷⁰ Aristotle defines phronetic knowledge in sharp contrast to two other forms of knowledge, *episteme* (scientific knowledge) and *techne* (technical knowledge). *Epistemic* knowledge is knowledge “that cannot be otherwise than it is”¹⁷¹ and consequently produces what we presently define as the modern ideal of scientific knowledge that is by nature universal and context-independent. Through analytical rationality, knowledge is constituted that is invariable in time and space.¹⁷² *Techne* and *phronesis* on the other hand represent two contrasting roles of intellectual work. The former is identical to what we know as technical knowledge or know-how. It concerns the application of technical knowledge that is variable and context-dependent.¹⁷³ Of phronetic knowledge or prudence on the other hand, Aristotle argues the following: “it is a true state, reasoned and capable of action with regard to things that are good or

¹⁶⁸ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 21

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 22

¹⁷⁰ Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* (London, Penguin Classics, 2004)

¹⁷¹ Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 148

¹⁷² Flyvbjerg, Bent ‘Making Social Science Matter’, in Papanagnou, Georgios (ed.), *Social Science and Policy Challenges: Democracy, values and capacities* (Paris, Unesco Publishing, 2012), p. 27

¹⁷³ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 28

bad for man.”¹⁷⁴ Practical knowledge is inherently directed towards action. It purports the action of making a practical judgement based on values within the confines of specific cases.¹⁷⁵ “The particular and the situationally dependent are emphasized over the universal and over rules.”¹⁷⁶ Put differently, a phronetic notion of science embraces a radically different approach to the production and goals of knowledge than its epistemic variant. It places higher value on knowledge that is practically minded than it does on knowledge that is theoretically centred.

One might then wonder what made this switch come about. Why is the prevailing notion of science, both social and natural, epistemic and why does it concern the production of context-independent and universally applicable theory? Stephen Toulmin locates the shift from a phronetic to an epistemic ideal of science in the 17th century. Philosophers like René Descartes and Thomas Hobbes on the one hand and scientists like Isaac Newton and Galileo Galilei on the other hand challenged the prevailing ideals of Renaissance humanism.¹⁷⁷ Logic displaced rhetoric, general principles and theories were favoured over particular cases and examples, and moral reasoning became theoretically-centred as opposed to practically minded. Our contemporary notion of the objective, universal and context-independent ideal of science is so persistent that there is no English term for phronesis. Furthermore, according to Richard J. Bernstein, the major issue at hand is that we have become incapable of conceiving what such an approach might look like. Strikingly, Bernstein’s

¹⁷⁴ Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 150

¹⁷⁵ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 29-30

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 31

¹⁷⁷ Toulmin, Stephen, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1992)

account of this transformation exposes the familiarity between phronetic or practical forms of science or rationality on the one hand, and the ideal of a dialogical community that has been examined in the first part of this chapter on the other hand.

When Aristotle sought to clarify what he meant by *phronesis* [...], he could still call upon the vivid memory of Pericles as the concrete exemplar of the individual who possessed the faculty of discriminating what was good for himself and for the *polis*. But today, when we seek for concrete examples of dialogical communities in which practical rationality flourishes, we are at much greater loss.¹⁷⁸

Aristotle stressed the importance of all three intellectual virtues (episteme, techne, and phronesis) in order to achieve a well-functioning society. The demise of phronesis not only inhibits any prospect of such a society or community, it has also, following Bent Flyvbjerg, provoked the failure of the social scientific enterprise.¹⁷⁹ The oft-pictured contrast between impotent social sciences and potent natural or exact sciences is flawed because the epistemic ideal of the natural sciences is applied to the social sciences. Social science, Flyvbjerg argues, has to “drop all pretence, however indirect, at emulating the success of the natural sciences in producing cumulative and predictive theory[.]”¹⁸⁰ Social science can only *matter*, he continues, when it swaps episteme for phronesis. More so, in terms of phronesis, social sciences will become more potent compared to the natural sciences.

Before we swing back to the notion of intervention, the final step in this section of the analysis is to assess the characteristics of “phronetic social science

¹⁷⁸ Bernstein, Richard J., *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell Publisher Limited, 1983), p. 230

¹⁷⁹ Flyvbjerg, Bent *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001)

¹⁸⁰ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 25

research[.]”¹⁸¹ Flyvbjerg argues that we have to probe three “value-rational questions:”¹⁸²

1. Where are we going?
2. Is this development desirable?
3. What, if anything, should we do about it?

Through the process of pondering the question what kind of research these questions might imply, the similarity with the characteristics of dialogical politics that are seeping through will be discarded as merely coincidental. The argument will be made that the phronetic ideal of science equally penetrates dialogical politics as phronetic social sciences.

Firstly, as Rorty and Linklater stated, one has to admit that there is no neutral ground or “view from nowhere”¹⁸³, so one has to start from where one is in the world. Secondly, identical to the ideal of dialogical politics, the answers one provides to the questions have to be put into an “ongoing dialogue about the problems”¹⁸⁴ that are the topic of discussion. Furthermore, since these questions entail a discussion about values, the more fundamental argument between foundationalism and relativism is unavoidable. And this is where the cosmopolitan-communitarian quarrel over the foundations of moral actions casts its largest shadow. On what principle or norm do we ground our action and values? As Bernstein argued, although there may be nothing that can satisfy our longing for a “fixed Archimedean point upon which we can secure our thought

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p. 25

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 33

¹⁸³ Ibid, p. 33

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 33

and action”¹⁸⁵, the dichotomy between objectivists and relativists is deeply questioned by phronesis or practical judgement. As clarified in part two of this dissertation, cosmopolitans and communitarians have been eager to found their moral philosophy on such an Archimedean point, i.e. our shared humanity versus our communal contextuality. Assessing this dichotomy from a phronetic and context-dependent perspective, the quarrel of so-called ‘isms’ is intentionally ignored. “Phronetic social scientists reject both these ‘isms’ and replace them with contextualism or situational ethics.”¹⁸⁶ They get more close to reality “by anchoring their research in the context studied, [...] thereby ensuring what Gadamer called a hermeneutic ‘fusion of horizons’.”¹⁸⁷ Subsequently, they “focus on practical activity and practical knowledge in everyday situations in society”, i.e. the “everyday life[.]”¹⁸⁸ Bernstein’s notion of “Cartesian anxiety”¹⁸⁹ or, in this context, fear of opening the door open to relativism is superfluous; the epistemic ideal has never fostered the anticipated results in social sciences.¹⁹⁰ Eventually, this opens up an ongoing context-dependent dialogue between “the local context, which gives phenomena their immediate meaning” and the “international and global context, in which phenomena can be appreciated for their general and conceptual significance.”¹⁹¹ The mutually assuming relationship between dialogical politics and the ideal of phronetic science is thereby undoubtedly established as two sides of the same coin.

¹⁸⁵ Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism*, p. 230

¹⁸⁶ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 35

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 38

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 40

¹⁸⁹ Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism*, p. 16

¹⁹⁰ Flyvbjerg, Bent ‘Aristotle, Foucault and Progressive Phronesis: Outline of an Applied Ethics for Sustainable Development’, in Winkler, Earl R. and Coombs, Jerrold R. (eds.), *Applied Ethics: A Reader* (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1993), p. 16

¹⁹¹ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 43

The last part of the analysis will involve the question of how this can be related to the issue of intervention. The idea of a renewed assessment of the cosmopolitan-communitarian stalemate by engaging it from an Aristotelian perspective and entangle it accordingly is not an entirely new endeavour. Chris Brown has argued that by shifting from the Kantian question ‘what should we do?’ to an Aristotelian one that asks ‘how should we live?’, we swap an intentionalist or deontological ethics for a consequentialist or virtue ethics.¹⁹² Following Martha Nussbaum, Brown holds that an Aristotelian turn may be the best way to break the cosmopolitan-communitarian impasse but requires more elaboration.¹⁹³ Accordingly, Brown has recently broached Flyvbjerg’s account of social scientific research by consequently applying the Aristotelian concept of phronesis on various topics within IR.¹⁹⁴ With regards to humanitarian interventions, Brown argues that judgement of whether or not to intervene should be based on the specific circumstances and the context of the case rather than applying a universal framework that obtains objective rules about intervention.

In dealing with complex situations, such as deciding whether it is right that one state should interfere forcibly in the affairs of another, there is no substitute for a form of moral reasoning that involves a judgement that takes into account the totality of circumstances, rather than seeks for a rule to apply.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹² Brown, Chris, ‘Towards a neo-Aristotelian resolution of the cosmopolitan-communitarian debate’, in Lensu, Maria and Fritz, Jan-Stefan (eds.), *Value Pluralism, Normative Theory and International Relations* (London, Macmillan Press Limited, 2000), p. 86-87

¹⁹³ Brown, *Towards a neo-Aristotelian resolution*, p. 96

¹⁹⁴ Brown, Chris, ‘The ‘Practice Turn’, *Phronesis* and Classical Realism: Towards a Phronetic International Political Theory?’, *Millennium – Journal of International Studies*, vol. 40 (2012), pp. 439-456

¹⁹⁵ Brown, Chris, ‘Selective humanitarianism: in defence of inconsistency’, in Chatterjee, Deen and Scheid, Don (eds.), *Ethics and foreign intervention* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 43

Moral reasoning about humanitarian intervention should not be a 'box-ticking' procedure. Similar to Chandler's critical contention that R2P's criteria are a checklist which requires all criteria to be met in order to justify intervention, Brown argues that "what we have here is *not* a pro-forma check-list of criteria whereby action is deemed just only when we are able to put a tick into each box" but rather a requirement for "a practically minded judgement [...] based on all the circumstances of a particular case."¹⁹⁶ This quite mercilessly discards the viability of frameworks like Paris's six institutional reforms that have to precede liberalisation or Caney's criteria for humanitarian interventions.

Brown rightly points to "the neo-positivist assumptions of mainstream IR" as a symptom of the fact that a turn to practice, steeped in Aristotelian phronesis, is not "yet firmly established in the repertoire of the discourse of IR."¹⁹⁷ By bringing back under attention Hans Morgenthau's policy advice to American diplomats, Brown holds that IR has always been dominantly epistemic. The problem raised by Morgenthau's emphasis on the practice of diplomacy however, is that "experience of the world is central to the exercise of practical reason[.]"¹⁹⁸ If the everyday context of the local has to be taken into account and knowledge has to be acquired through practice, any assessment of issues of intervention is futile when not founded on experience that cannot be learned from books. Although it is thought-provoking to note how Brown reminds us that "most of us, young and old, lack experience of the big issues of international political life"¹⁹⁹, there is one feature missing in his analysis that threatens his argument with collapse. Crucially, this missing link is what prevents a phronetic

¹⁹⁶ Brown, *Selective humanitarianism*, p. 45

¹⁹⁷ Brown, *The 'Practice Turn', Phronesis and Classical Realism*, p. 448

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 456

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 455

approach to the intervention dilemma from becoming an anything goes method of applying judgement that exalts arbitrariness and inconsistency.²⁰⁰ To clarify this, we have to return to the value-rational questions a phronetic social scientist raises. Flyvbjerg adds a fourth question to the list which inquires “Who gains and who loses, and by which mechanisms of power?”²⁰¹ Like Brown, both Aristotle and Gadamer did not include an analysis and consideration of power when engaging the notion of phronesis. However, Flyvbjerg argues, when thinking about how issues can be assessed, “we must advance from the original conception of phronesis to one explicitly including power.”²⁰² This importance is clearly advocated by Richard Bernstein as well:

No practical discussion is going to take place unless you understand the relevance of *phronesis*. But no practical philosophy can be adequate for our time *unless it confronts the analysis of power and how it operates in our everyday lives*.²⁰³

Along with the classical questions as noted by Aristotle, the phronetic scientist has to wonder how power operates within particular issues. This will lead him to ask the following questions:

- “Who gains and who loses?”
- “Through what kinds of power relations?”
- “What possibilities are available to change existing power relations?”
- “What are the power relations among those who ask the questions?”²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ See Brown, *Selective humanitarianism*

²⁰¹ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 33

²⁰² Ibid, p. 37

²⁰³ Bernstein, cited by Flyvbjerg, *Aristotle, Foucault and Progressive Phronesis*, p. 23

²⁰⁴ Flyvbjerg, *Making Social Science Matter*, p. 37

Negligence to include these questions into the assessment of any issue, like for instance interventionism, inevitably shifts towards the direction of voluntarism and a general lack of criticism. There is no general framework, as it concerns context-dependent knowledge that is rooted in the everyday lives of the people who are involved in the particular issue. Instead, we have to ask detailed questions and construct narratives that ask who is getting and who is using power and for what reason. We have to clarify the problems we are facing and entangle them by arguing how things can be done differently. This process is an ongoing dialogue that will never produce final answers.²⁰⁵

The constitutive importance of considering the notion of power is strikingly echoed in David Chandler's critique of the so-called uncritical Liberal Peace critics when they take "an uncritical approach to power."²⁰⁶ Moreover, negligence of this consideration opens the door for the "vague and ambitious 'ethical checklists'"²⁰⁷ that justify intervention. Taking power into consideration effectively challenges the moral universalism of cosmopolitanism that is consequently exposed as an empire in denial.²⁰⁸ Unfortunately, delving into the notion of power too deeply would exceed the scope of this dissertation. Rather, the crucial point being made here is that the abovementioned questions on power reveal some crucial insights in the context of intervention. Who gains and who loses when an intervention is waged or not? What are the power relations among the parties involved? And can these relations be changed? Especially Flyvbjerg's last question on power penetrates the core of the relationship between dialogical politics and phronetic social sciences most strikingly. By

²⁰⁵ Flyvbjerg, *Aristotle, Foucault and Progressive Phronesis*, p. 23

²⁰⁶ Chandler, *The uncritical critique*, p. 53

²⁰⁷ Chandler, *The Responsibility to protect*, p. 69

²⁰⁸ Chandler, *Empire In Denial*

pondering what the power relations are among those who ask the questions, i.e. the scientists, the latter are unambiguously drawn into the whole enterprise. When we assess the notion of intervention from a phronetic perspective, we are no longer epistemic data collectors or academics in an ivory tower. It concerns our position towards the subject we are analysing. We engage with the everyday lives of people and place ourselves as one voice among others in the dialogue about the issues that either require to intervene or not, for the sake of ending human suffering.

Phronetic social science is dialogical in the sense that it incorporates, and, if successful, itself is incorporated into, a polyphony of voices, with no one voice, including that of the researcher, claiming final authority.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁹ Flyvbjerg, Bent, *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 139

Conclusion

Intervening in other societies as something to be avoided and rejected is without a doubt an easy and tempting matter to argue. Occasionally, this pendulum of criticism tends to swing in the extreme direction of radicalism and cynicism. As such, the whole discussion risks being maintained by extreme voices shouting back and forth. In *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo*,²¹⁰ Noam Chomsky argues that international politics should be guided by the principle of “do no harm”²¹¹, as the prevailing assessments of intervention justifications are frequently inconsistent. He even references Bull’s warning that powerful actors might define themselves as judges of the common good without taking into account deferring opinions and thusly make themselves the menace to effective action in this world.²¹² Although this is an accurate assertion, Chomsky nevertheless seems to be missing the point Bull was trying to make. Although he was aware of the problems any solidarism of the will had to acknowledge, Bull foresaw the impediment any adherence to the status quo could present to efforts against human suffering. Exploring plausible prospects to safeguard such attempts, sadly neglected by Chomsky, is one of the core ideas that moved this dissertation.

Assessing the notion of intervention through the perspective of cosmopolitan and communitarian traditions of thought, this dissertation made

²¹⁰ Chomsky, Noam, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (Monroe, Common Courage Press, 1999)

²¹¹ Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism*, p. 156

²¹² Bull, Hedley ‘Justice in International Relations: The Hagey Lectures’, in Hurrell, Andrew and Alderson, Kai (eds.) *Hedley Bull on International Society* (Hampshire, Palgrave MacMillan, 2000), pp. 206-245

an encompassing articulation of the so-called intervention dilemma. Rejecting arguments that relied too heavily on these forms of foundationalism, the argument was made that if one purports to avoid the stalemate these arguments induce, one has to place dialogical politics and the everyday context at the core of the analysis and make practical judgements accordingly. This does not lapse into relativism because the crucial notion of assessing questions on intervention is to ask questions on the power relations among different perspectives involved, including that of the researcher.

The argument set out by addressing the central tension among Liberal Peace critics Paris and Chandler. Rather than putting the reader on the wrong track, the first part placed both these arguments in their most enthralling and persuasive context in order to explicate the persistency of the intervention dilemma in the Liberal Peace framework. Not compromising for a trade-off between the positive and negative aspects of intervening or not, the thread that stitched together this part was the question of how this dichotomy could be overcome. This seamlessly segued into the inquiry on the deeper traditions of thought that underpinned this dichotomy.

In the second part, these traditions were presented in an according fashion: the cosmopolitan notion of a shared humanity and the communitarian objection to overcoming our communal boundaries once more explicated the entrenchment of the dilemma. In addition to a detailed understanding of these positions, the part debouched into an analysis of John Rawls's *The Law of Peoples* as a possible mitigation to bridge the gap. Through a reading of Williams's work on Rawls however, the conclusion was drawn that Rawls's attempt, rather than

succeeding at its endeavour of bridging the gap, impinged on one of the starkest formulations of the *Catch 22* that is the intervention dilemma.

The third and final part was not intended as a *deus ex machina* but as an exercise in thinking differently by letting go of our foundationalist longing and start from where we are. Following a different strand of cosmopolitanism initiated by an inclusion of Richmond's notion of a Post-Liberal Peace that starts from the everyday context, the idea of a dialogical politics was distilled as a challenge to the current dilemma. Through an engagement with Linklater and Shapcott, two tenors of 'cosmopolitanism of a different kind' and its implied dialogical politics, the part went on to the question what this all might mean in practical terms and so bring the argument back to the dilemma of intervention. The similarity between dialogical politics and a phronetic approach to social scientific research was thereby exposed as two sides of the same coin. They both concern taking where you are in the world as a designated starting point for an ongoing dialogue among all parties involved, including that of the researcher, as a fusion of horizons. Moreover, a phronetic turn might actually provoke dialogical politics. Its goal is to ask questions of where we are going and if this is desirable in order to make practical judgements. This turn to practice was eventually embraced as a welcome evolution in IR. Touching upon Brown's recent work, a sketch was provided of what this new mode of thinking might imply. Finally, successful outcomes of this phronetic advancement were seriously questioned by elaborating on Flyvbjerg's emphasis on taking into account the notion of power.

There nevertheless seems to be an impediment to this whole enterprise that might furrow the critical brow. Such a critical engagement might expose its

negligence in incorporating an explanatory case study as a significant shortcoming. Is a refusal to assess such examples not an obvious sign of aspired epistemic knowledge that is not rooted in a specific context but derived from abstract reasoning? The initial choice to exclude the English School argument from the analysis was founded on the presence of such aspirations in the arguments of Bull and Wheeler. In hindsight, we can argue that the tension between pluralists and solidarists in the English School is irreconcilable because they both aspire an epistemic approach to the intervention dilemma. Be that as it may, the question still stands: why is there no explicit engagement with the context of the everyday in the framework of a dialogue that includes the argument presented in this dissertation? Put differently, why is there no example of a phronetic assessment of humanitarian intervention?

An apparent disappointing objection to this claim might be to hold that doing so would have exceeded the scope of this dissertation. The central topic of this analysis was twofold: a bright articulation of the intervention dilemma that contemplates the possibility of transcending it. This is not quite the same as coming up with an elaborate and universal framework on intervention. As always, the devil is in the details because the possibility and desirability of such an attempt was severely challenged in the last part of this dissertation. More illuminating would be to explore how a phronetic approach to interventionism might be translated in the day-to-day praxis. It is here, and not in the present inquiry, that the necessity of including case studies is to be situated. The main purpose of this dissertation could therefore be summarised as an exercise of opening doors that are commonly held to be locked or even non-existent.

Opening the door of concrete case studies would be one of the thought-provoking examples of future enquiry.

Still, further research topics have interminable emerged since the introduction of phronesis to IR. Through the recent work of Brown, we can observe the seeping introduction of a new approach to the more pressing topics in IR, like humanitarian intervention, that place them in a brighter perspective. This is an aspirational yet vulnerable enterprise that requires continuous engagement in the future. By addressing Brown's negligence of taking into consideration the notion of power, the exercise in balance this dissertation sought to place to the fore is explicated once more. Holding that there is no substitute for moral reasoning that involves making practical judgements, Brown rightly rejects any attempt to construct universal, epistemic frameworks. However, this endeavour risks slipping away into a relativistic resort to arbitrariness, selectivity, and even inconsistency. Only by asking questions through the scope of power, like who wins and who loses when an intervention takes place or not, can we make practical judgements that matter.

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